



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur
Director

September 2, 2010

REQUEST: City Council Bill 10-0585 / Sale of Property – 1536 North Caroline Street

For the purpose of authorizing the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore to sell, at either public or private sale, all its interest in certain property that is located at 1536 North Caroline Street (Block 1125, Lot 032) and is no longer needed for public use; and providing for a special effective date.

RECOMMENDATION: Amendment and Approval; amendment as follows:

Correct the last line of the property description on line 19 of the first page of the bill to state: "... constructed **before** 1920" in lieu of "... constructed in 1920"

STAFF: Martin French

PETITIONER: The Administration (Department of Housing and Community Development)

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/ GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: 1536 North Caroline Street, the subject property, is located on the west side of the street, approximately 18' south of the intersection with Federal Street. This property measures approximately 15' by 80' and is improved with a three-story row building measuring approximately 15' by 56'. This site is zoned R-8, and is located within the Oliver Neighborhood Development Program Urban Renewal Plan area and the Old East Baltimore National Register Historic District. The building is currently vacant, and this property was transferred by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City to the Mayor and City Council (Department of Housing and Community Development) on February 23, 2007.

General Area: The Oliver neighborhood is one in which a mix of three-story and two-story row-housing predominates. Most of the housing predates World War I, and the row of which this premises is a part appears on an 1896 map of Baltimore. Baltimore City's housing market typology indicates that the immediate vicinity of this property is considered part of a distressed residential market cluster.

HISTORY

- The Oliver Neighborhood Development Program Urban Renewal Plan was originally approved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance no. 1067, dated May 17, 1971.

- The Oliver NDP Urban Renewal Plan was last amended by Amendment 12, dated December 5, 2002, approved by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore by Ordinance no. 02-458, dated December 19, 2002, which made the Oliver NDP Urban Renewal Area part of the East Baltimore Development, Inc. (EBDI) area.

CONFORMITY TO PLANS

This action is consistent with the City of Baltimore's Comprehensive Master Plan, LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN, with respect to strategic redevelopment of vacant properties throughout the City (LIVE Goal 1, Objective 2) and its Strategy 2: Develop a vacant housing reclamation strategy for Transitional and Distressed neighborhoods; Measurable outcome: Fewer vacant residential properties. This action would constitute one step in implementing this strategy.

This action is also consistent with the Oliver NDP Urban Renewal Plan's Housing Objectives: To provide standard housing for all families presently residing in the area; rehabilitation of the maximum number of housing units will be fostered and encouraged; clearance treatment will be minimized; a majority of the housing units provided in the area shall be standard housing units for low and moderate income families or individuals.

ANALYSIS

The City of Baltimore (Department of Housing and Community Development) would like to transfer a vacant building with potential for re-use as decent, safe, and sanitary housing to a person or entity capable of returning it to habitable condition. This vacant row-house building is not needed by the City of Baltimore for a public facility and can be disposed of for redevelopment purposes. The row of houses of which this premises is a part is still intact, and demolition of the building would impair the integrity of this side of the 1500 block of North Caroline Street. Approval of this bill would give the City capability to transfer the building to a new owner who would assume responsibility for renovating the building and ultimately having it re-occupied as a moderate-income family residence or dwelling units. One block south of this property is a public school, Dr. Bernard Harris, Sr. Elementary School, and a recreation center; one block west on Federal Street, around the corner from this property, is a multi-purpose neighborhood center, the Oliver Recreation Center, and a public playground. These amenities would be attractive to potential residents of the house if there were minor children in their family. As a housing submarket identified by the City's housing market typology as distressed, the Oliver neighborhood would benefit from private re-investment in the area, of which this could become an example if authorized by the proposed legislation.

Staff notified the Oliver Community Association, Inc., the Oliver Economic Development Corporation, Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC), East Baltimore Community Corporation, Inc., Adjacent Neighborhood Improvement Association, Inc., and City Councilman Carl Stokes of this action.

Thomas J. Stosur
Director